

The San Bernardino County Museum's Guide to

NATIVE AMERICAN TRADITIONS: HOPI KATSINAS

Use this guide as you explore this exhibit. Think about the questions it asks. Discuss them with other visitors. Do you want to learn more? There are many books about the Hopi, about Katsinas, and about traditional Native American groups across the United States. Check your local library, or visit the Museum Store.



WHAT'S IN A NAME?

According to the Hopi people, the correct way to pronounce the name of these objects is Katsina (cat-SEE-nuh). American tourists in Hopi land mistakenly began to call them kachinas (ka-CHEE-nuhz).

DID YOU KNOW?

Katsina dolls were originally gifts given to young girls to teach them about Hopi traditions.

ANATOMY OF A KATSINA DOLL



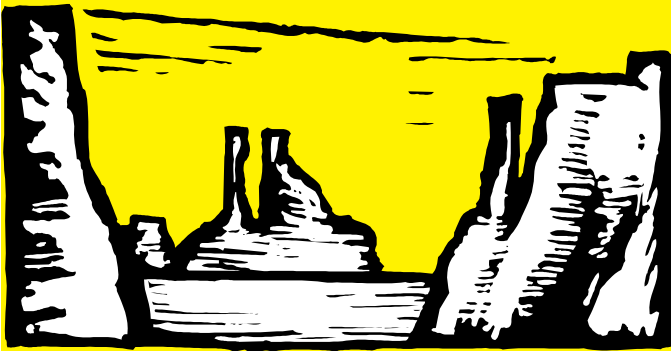
WHAT'S A DOLL?

What you may know as a “kachina doll” is called a *tihu* by the Hopi. *Tithu* (plural of *tihu*) represent the Katsina dancers who in turn are spiritual Katsinas.

Do you play with dolls? Do you think Hopi children play with *tithu*? Can you think of any “dolls” in your culture that you would never play with because they represent something sacred to you?



WHERE WOULD YOU LIVE?



Where in this environment would you want to live? On top of a mesa? On the desert floor? Think about the advantages and disadvantages of living in each place. What about the weather? Getting food? Safety? What else can you think of?

NOT ALL KATSINA DOLLS ARE ALIKE.

Some are small and some are large. Some are plain and others



are very fancy. Can you think of reasons why they look so different? (Hint: some Katsinas represent females and some are males, but they all relate to one another in various ways).

FINE FEATHERED FRIENDS

Most of these Katsina dolls have different colors and kinds of bird feathers. But some have wooden “feathers.” Think about federal laws that protect migratory birds. Why do you think some Katsinas have real feathers and others do not?



Sometimes feathers are used for Bird Katsina dolls. What else do feathers represent on different Katsina dolls?

ZOOM, ZOOM, ZOOM ... TAKE A CLOSER LOOK.

Find the Katsina dolls that have these parts. Hint: sometimes if you look closely you'll find things in surprising places! Do Native Americans other than Hopis use some of these things? Do they use them in the same way or for the same reason?



What is your favorite color?
Find a Katsina doll painted with that color.
Is it your favorite Katsina doll?
Do you think you could have more than one favorite color?

MAMMALS, BIRDS, AND INSECTS ARE ALL IMPORTANT KATSINAS.



Can you match these Katsina dolls with the kinds of animals they are? Find the dolls in the exhibit and look for the features that are like the animal's.



Now visit the museum's Hall of Mammals downstairs and our Bird Halls upstairs. Look at the real animals and think about how the Hopi have represented them. Why do you think they selected these animal characteristics?

